

**Hale Middle School  
Student Handbook**

George P. King, Jr.  
Principal

**Hale Middle School**  
55 Hartley Road  
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978-897-4788  
[hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)

## Table of Contents

<b>TRANSLATION ASSISTANCE</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>PRINCIPAL’S WELCOME MESSAGE</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>STAFF DIRECTORY</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>About the Student Handbook</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Core Values</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Equal Opportunity</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Inclusion and Accommodations</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Rights and Responsibilities</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>School Calendar</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>School Hours</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Emergency Closings, Delayed Openings, and Early Dismissals</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Attendance and Dismissal</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Truancy</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>After School</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Notes from Home</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Vacations</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>ACADEMICS</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Classroom Standards</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Textbooks</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Online Academic Tools</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Make-Up Work</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Cheating and Plagiarism</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Communication From and With Teachers</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Grades</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Honor Roll</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Report Cards</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Clubs</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Athletics</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Behavior</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Bullying and Harassment</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Vandalism</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Weapons</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Technology Resources</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>School Climate And Culture</b> .....	<b>17</b>

Behavioral Contract .....	19
<b>HEALTH AND GUIDANCE RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Illness, Accidents, and Emergencies.....	19
Medication.....	20
Health Screenings.....	20
Guidance.....	20
<b>OTHER RULES AND INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Bathroom Passes .....	20
Cell Phones.....	20
Concerts.....	21
Dances .....	21
Dress Code .....	21
Eighth Grade Trip.....	22
Field Trips.....	22
Fundraising .....	22
Gum.....	22
Gym .....	22
Library.....	22
Lockers and Personal Items.....	23
Lost and Found .....	23
Lunch and School Cafeteria .....	23
Recess .....	24
Safety and Security.....	24
School Store .....	24
Transportation .....	24
Visitors.....	25
<b>PARENT/GUARDIAN SUPPLEMENT .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>26</b>
About the Parent/Guardian Supplement to the Student Handbook.....	26
Consent to Public Identification of Student .....	26
<b>COMMUNICATION .....</b>	<b>26</b>
Communications From School.....	26
Back to School Night.....	27
Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences .....	27
PowerSchool .....	27
<b>CURRICULUM.....</b>	<b>27</b>
Brochures, Standards, and Benchmarks.....	27
Health and Sex Education .....	27
<b>HEALTH SERVICES .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Emergency Contact and Health Information .....	28
Seventh Grade Entry.....	28
<b>FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Free and Reduced Price Meals .....	28
Field Trips.....	28
Yearbooks .....	28

**PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL..... 29**

- Volunteering in School..... 29**
- Parent-Teacher Organization ..... 29**
- School Council ..... 29**
- Special Education Parents’ Advisory Council ..... 29**

**PICKING UP STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL..... 29**

**NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES ..... 30**

- Alcohol and Drug Use ..... 30**
- Attendance ..... 30**
- Bullying and Harassment ..... 31**
- Hazing ..... 32**
- Discipline ..... 32**
- Discipline of Students with Special Education Needs..... 33**
- Special Education Needs ..... 34**
- Use of Networked Information Resources ..... 35**
- Gender Equity .....36**

## **TRANSLATION ASSISTANCE**

### Familias que Necesitan Traducción

Los estudiantes o familias de habla hispana que desean ayuda en traducción o orientación en un idioma diferente del Inglés pueden contactarse con la maestra/coordinadora de Inglés como un Segundo Idioma (ESL),. Monica Flores, [mflores@nrsd.net](mailto:mflores@nrsd.net), 978-779-0539.

### Familias que Precisan de Tradução

Los estudiantes ou familias quem fala Portugues que precisa de assistencia com traduco ou orientacao pode comunicar com a professora/cordenadora de Inglés como Segundo Indíoma (ESL), Monica Flores, [mflores@nrsd.net](mailto:mflores@nrsd.net), 978-779-0539.

### Families Requesting Translation

Students or families who need translation assistance or orientation in a language other than English may contact the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher/coordinator, [Monica](#) Flores ([mflores@nrsd.net](mailto:mflores@nrsd.net)) 978-779-0539.

## **PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME MESSAGE**

*Welcome to Hale Middle School for the 2015-2016 school year.*

*The Student Handbook outlines the rules and practices of the school. Thanks to the hard work of our School Council, the Handbook is organized to make it informative and easy to read. Our goal at Hale is to create a safe, respectful, and intellectually challenging school environment, and the Handbook outlines some of how we achieve that.*

*You will have a great opportunity to grow and learn this year. All of us at Hale want to be sure you get the most possible out of your middle school education. We are here to work with you to help make that happen.*

*Please take the time to review this Handbook and make sure you understand the expectations we have of you as a student. If you have any questions about anything you read in this Handbook, please make sure you ask your teachers or me.*

*I am open to the ideas – big and small - of students, parents/guardians, and staff. My desire is to make sure Hale is the community that we all want it to be. To achieve that, collaboration is a necessity and communication is the key. So, throughout the school year, please speak up and offer your thoughts on how we can improve our school, and the experiences of all who attend and work here.*

*I am excited to spend this school year with you at Hale.*

*George King  
Principal*

## STAFF DIRECTORY

Name	Position	Phone Extension (and Room)	Email
<b>Administration</b>			
George King	Principal	2221	gking@nrsd.net
Leigh deMont	Administrative Asst.	2220	mdemont@nrsd.net
<b>Support Staff</b>			
Greg Newton	Integrated Technology	2215	gnewton@nrsd.net
Kelly Devlin	Guidance Counselor	2223	kdevlin@nrsd.net
Elaine Brannen	Library Media Assistant	2219	<a href="mailto:ebrannen@nrsd.net">ebrannen@nrsd.net</a>
Carol Ann Gjeltema	Nurse	2222	cgjeltema@nrsd.net
Rosemary Sullender	Nurse	2222	rsullender@nrsd.net
<b>Grade 6 Team</b>			
Monica CampoBasso	Math	2207	mcampobasso@nrsd.net
Susanne Trudeau	Social Studies	2206	strudeau@nrsd.net
Amy Styles	English/Language Arts	2204	astyles@nrsd.net
Monika Bokon	Science	2208	mbokon@nrsd.net
Erin Holbrook	Special Education	2202	eholbrook@nrsd.net
Christine Durkee	Plus Class Teacher	2201	cdurkee@nrsd.net
<b>Grade 7 Team</b>			
Karen Boisvert	Math	2309	kboisvert@nrsd.net
Kim Bollus	Social Studies	2310	kbollus@nrsd.net
Shannon Sarno	Science	2312	ssarno@nrsd.net
Moira LaPointe	English/Language Arts	2308	<a href="mailto:mlapointe@nrsd.net">mlapointe@nrsd.net</a>
Laura Conway	Special Education	2313	lconway@nrsd.net
<b>Grade 8 Team</b>			
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Kevin Keaveney	Social Studies	2304	kkeaveney@nrsd.net
Michael Turpin	English/Language Arts	2306	mturpin@nrsd.net
Maggie Perreault	Math	2305	mperreault@nrsd.net
Charlotte Dzerkacz	Spanish	2102	cdzerkacz@nrsd.net
Kelsey Logue	Special Education	2307	klogue@nrsd.net
<b>Related Arts</b>			
Mark Rodriquenz	Technology Education	2103	mrodriquenz@nrsd.net
Erin Denehy	Health	2101	edenehy@nrsd.net
Kaitlyn Van Buskirk	Art	2205	kvanbuskirk@nrsd.net
Erin Morrill	Music	2236	emorrill@nrsd.net
Jamie Tucker	Physical Education	2212	jtucker@nrsd.net

Name	Position	Phone Extension (and Room)	Email
<b>Special Education Paraprofessionals</b>			
Denise Guillemette	Instructional Assistant		
Rebecca Butler	Instructional Assistant		
Liam McMahon	Instructional Assistant		
<b>Cafeteria and Custodial</b>			
Karen Gilchrist	Cafeteria Manager	2233	kgilchrest@nrsd.net

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **About the Student Handbook**

The Student Handbook provides important information for students and their parents/guardians about Hale Middle School.

Look at the Student Handbook when you want to know what happens in school, and so you know the rules that are used at Hale and at school-sponsored activities. Rules at Hale have been developed because of federal and state laws and regulations, Nashoba Regional School District (NRSD) policies, and because the Principal has determined that a rule is necessary.

Information on certain topics that are more relevant to parents/guardians can be found in the Parent/Guardian Supplement to the Student Handbook, and on the Hale and NRSD websites.

Students and their parents/guardians are asked to sign a form at the beginning of each school year to confirm that they have read the Student Handbook and understand their roles and responsibilities. Please make sure that you have a family discussion about the school rules, and the consequences for breaking those rules, before signing the form.

Students and parents/guardians can find other information about Hale on the school website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)). The website has links to classroom pages that include homework assignments and grade level resources made available by teachers. The website has school-wide information including a calendar of events, the lunch menu, and the monthly Hale newsletter, and NRSD-wide information such as the school year calendar, and information on, and login access to, PowerSchool.

On the NRSD website ([www.nrsd.net](http://www.nrsd.net)), you will find the online payment center (for lunch payments), assistance information (the Free and Reduced Lunch Application, for example), and information on NRSD policies (such as those on health and wellness, special education, and transportation). The NRSD website also includes information on the NRSD School Committee (for example, policies adopted by the School Committee and meeting minutes).

If you have any questions about anything in the Student Handbook, please ask a teacher or the Principal. Depending on the topic, staff in the Main Office, a Guidance Counselor, or School Nurse can also answer your questions.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Core Values**

Hale has adopted the following core values to guide school us in our mission:

**Community** is our most basic value. All Hale students, staff and parents must work together as one to provide the safe, respectful, positive environment needed for our students to learn to their fullest potential and become responsible, contributing citizens of our school community and the greater society in which they live.

**Respect** ~ Have respect for yourself, each other and your environment.

**Inclusiveness** – Understand the value of differences within our community and appreciate each unique individual.

**Responsibility** ~ Own your decisions and actions with integrity, and recognize the impact they have on others.

**Engage** ~ Play an active role in the learning process, setting positive examples for others.

### **Mission Statement**

Recognizing the diverse needs and uniqueness of the early adolescent, Hale Middle School provides our students with authentic, creative learning opportunities that meet each student’s physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs, allowing them to maximize their potential, and preparing them to be successful in future education. Through a climate of respect and inclusiveness, curricula that go beyond the traditional academic offerings, effective communication between all members of the school community, and the use of cutting edge educational techniques, we strive to educate the whole child. Our success will result in mature, independent, confident learners, who have the tools necessary for success in their further education as well as in their roles as productive members of their community.

### **Equal Opportunity**

Hale is an equal opportunity educational institution. All students have equal access to educational opportunities and co-curricular activities. No one may discriminate against any other person because of their age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or for any other reason.

### **Inclusion and Accommodations**

Some students require additional help to learn. A student’s need may be long-term due to a disability or temporary due to an injury. Hale is committed to providing all students with the help they may need to fully participate and be successful in school. If a student requires accommodations, a student or parent/guardian may speak with a teacher or the Principal.

Additional information can be found in the Parent/Guardian Supplement to the Student Handbook and on the NRSB website ([www.nrsd.net](http://www.nrsd.net)).

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

A student has rights under federal and state laws and regulations and NRSB and school policies. A student may exercise his/her rights if doing so does not interfere with the rights of any other person in the school. Responsibilities accompany these rights.

A student has the right to:

- Attend school in a safe, orderly, and learning-centered school environment;

- Participate in academic and school or NRSD-sponsored activities without discrimination and free from bullying or harassment;
- Be informed about school rules;
- Be treated fairly in all disciplinary matters;
- Ask questions and express personal opinions;
- Have personal information be treated with confidentiality.

A student has the responsibility to:

- Contribute to a safe, orderly, and learning-centered environment by showing respect for other people, their property and school property;
- Work to the best of his/her ability in all academic matters and co-curricular activities;
- Recognize and report acts of bullying/harassment, and keep teachers or other school staff informed of any issue that impacts safety in the school;
- Know and follow all school rules;
- Ask for help in resolving problems, and accept responsibility for his/her actions;
- Behave with the highest standards of conduct and sportsmanship when participating in or attending school-sponsored activities.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **School Calendar**

The school calendar is established every year by the NRSD School Committee. The calendar is available on the Hale website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)) or in the Main Office.

### **School Hours**

School hours are 7:45 A.M. - 2:15 P.M. A student is tardy if s/he arrives to Homeroom after 7:45 A.M. On an early release day, dismissal time is 11:30 A.M, unless otherwise specified.

Students are not supervised prior to 7:35 A.M. A student should not arrive at school before 7:35 A.M. unless participating in a specific activity for which arrangements have been made.

### **Emergency Closings, Delayed Openings, and Early Dismissals**

When school is cancelled, or there is a delayed opening or an early dismissal due to a weather emergency, there will be an announcement on TV channels WBZ (4), WCVB (5), WHDH (7) and FOX (25). The information will also be on the NRSD website ([www.nrsd.net](http://www.nrsd.net)).

Parents/Guardians must have emergency plans in place in the event school is dismissed early for weather or other emergencies and parents/guardians are not home.

### **Attendance and Dismissal**

A student must be in school and in class whenever possible.

If a student will not be in school or will be late to school, a parent/guardian must email the school health office ([halenurse@nrsd.net](mailto:halenurse@nrsd.net)) or call to leave a message at 978-897-5074.

When a student is to be dismissed from school early, a parent/guardian must send a dated note or an email to the school secretary stating the specific dismissal time, the reason for the early dismissal, and who will be coming to pick the student up. The student must be picked up from the Main Office.

A student is not allowed to go home with another student without a written note or email from a parent/guardian.

A student who is absent, arrives at school after 11:00 A.M., is dismissed from school before 11:00 A.M. and does not return, or who is on suspension, is not eligible to participate in school-sponsored athletic or co-curricular activities or attend a school-sponsored dance on that day. If a student has excessive (excused or unexcused) absences from school, the Principal will contact the family.

### **Truancy**

A student who is absent from school for all or part of a day without the knowledge and consent of his/her parent/guardian is considered truant. A student with more than 7 unexcused absences will be subject to disciplinary action that may include failing grades in all subjects and repeating the grade.

### **After School**

A student is expected to leave school at dismissal time unless s/he is involved in an athletic or co-curricular activity or staying for extra help. A student cannot remain at school after school without supervision.

### **Notes from Home**

A student is required to have a note or email from his/her parent/guardian to:

- Be dismissed before the regular dismissal time;
- Get picked up by someone other than his/her parent/guardian or go home with another student;
- Do anything other than what s/he usually does at dismissal time.

If a student does not have a note, the student will be denied permission to stay in school or leave school in the alternate manner and will be required to leave as usual.

To ensure timely processing of a note from home, a parent/guardian should make sure that the note is legible, dated, includes a student's full name, grade, and Homeroom teacher, and includes all the relevant details. A student must give any notes to his/her Homeroom teacher or email must be sent to the school secretary.

### **Vacations**

A vacation is not a valid reason for a student to be absent from school. Vacation days when school is in session are considered unexcused absences even if a parent/guardian writes a note. While a teacher will allow a student to make up missed assignments, quizzes, and tests, a teacher is not required to prepare work in advance for a student who will be missing days of school due to a vacation. A teacher is also not required to re-teach a topic to a student who returns from a vacation. A student is responsible for speaking with a teacher to determine the work that needs to be done when s/he returns to school.

## **ACADEMICS**

### **Classroom Standards**

At the beginning of a school year or class, each teacher will distribute his/her expectations for the classroom so that a student understands what is expected academically, and any rules that are specific to the class (for example, safety rules in science classes).

A student is always expected to be on time, to be prepared to participate, and to bring any needed materials (such as textbooks, notebooks, and other school supplies). See the Student Supply List on the Hale website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)) for more information on supplies.

A student who disrupts a class will have an opportunity to resolve the matter with the teacher. If a student continues to behave inappropriately, the teacher may contact a student's parents/guardians to discuss the issue. A teacher may also assign a detention or refer a student to the Principal for possible further disciplinary action.

### **Textbooks**

The school will supply certain textbooks during the school year. A student is responsible for the proper care and return of these books. If a student does not return a book, or if a book is returned in unacceptable condition, the student or his/her parent/guardian will be required to pay to replace the book.

### **Online Academic Tools**

The school uses online tools and sites as academic resources, and a student must become familiar with and use these tools and resources throughout the school year. Teachers use Google Apps to post homework assignments, enable students to work on team projects, and provide information (links to materials for research projects, for example). Each teacher has a Google Apps site that can be accessed through the Hale website. Other online resources available through the Hale website include guides to citing sources and a variety of tools for conducting research and organizing written documents.

Google Apps for Education, including Google Docs, are accessible free-of-charge from any internet-connected device. A student does not need to download any software. A student who does not have access to an internet-connected device at home must speak with his/her teachers so that alternative plans can be made.

Each student is assigned a unique User Name and Password to access Google Apps. A student must share his/her User Name and Password with his/her parent/guardian if a parent/guardian wants to access the Google sites.

### **Make-Up Work**

A student who has been absent, or who wants to improve his/her grade in a class, must assume the responsibility for making up work or asking for extra help. If a student is absent, s/he will be given an appropriate amount of time to make up the work missed. After the third consecutive day of an absence, a parent/guardian may request and pick-up homework from the Main Office.

## **Cheating and Plagiarism**

A student may not cheat or plagiarize. A teacher will discuss any suspected incident of cheating or plagiarism with a student, and will notify a student's parent/guardian and the Principal. A student who cheats or plagiarizes may receive a failing grade and may be subject to disciplinary action.

A student may refer to resource materials on the Hale website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)) for information on how to conduct research, cite sources, and avoid plagiarism.

## **Communication From and With Teachers**

A teacher will contact a student's parents/guardians when there is a significant decline (10 or more points) in a student's academic performance between trimester reporting periods.

A teacher will speak with a student and may contact a student's parents/guardians if s/he sees a student behave inappropriately, there is a significant change in a student's behavior, a student is asked to leave the classroom, or when there is an unusual event at a school-sponsored activity.

A student and his/her parents/guardians are encouraged to talk first with a teacher if there is an issue with a specific class, teaching practice, or the curriculum. A student or parent/guardian may also contact the Principal if an issue is not satisfactorily resolved.

## **Grades**

Grades on homework, quizzes, tests, and reports are available to a student in writing, and to a student's parents/guardians online through PowerSchool, within 10 school days of the completion of the assignment. (Parents/Guardians may see the Parent/Guardian Supplement for more information about how to access PowerSchool.)

Hale's grading system includes standard based reporting and letter grades as follows:

A+	97-100
A	93-96
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	Below 60
Inc	Incomplete

A student who receives an incomplete grade on his/her report card will have two weeks to make up the work.

An 8<sup>th</sup> Grade student who receives more than one “F” for an academic subject may be ineligible to participate in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade recognition activities.

### **Honor Roll**

A student who receives A- to A+ in all subjects in a trimester will receive High Honors.

A student who receives B- or better in all subjects in a trimester will receive Honors.

This is subject to change.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are issued three times a year after the end of each approximately thirteen-week trimester. See the NRSD School Year Calendar on the Hale website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)) for the specific dates on which grades close for a trimester and report cards are issued.

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to use PowerSchool to stay informed about grades during the course of the school year.

## **CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS**

There are many opportunities at Hale for students to get involved in activities, organizations, and athletics. Requirements for participation do not limit access on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, gender identity, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness

### **Clubs**

Students from all grades are welcome in all clubs. Additional activities may be organized during the school year depending on the interests of students and the availability of advisors. All clubs must be approved by the Principal and have an adult advisor. A list of all clubs can be found on our website.

A student who wants to participate in a club must have passing grades in all subjects and demonstrate appropriate behavior. A student who does not meet these standards may be permitted to participate, at the discretion of the Principal. The Principal may also determine a student to be ineligible to participate. A student who is absent, arrives at school after 11:00 A.M., is dismissed before 11:00 A.M. and does not return, or is on suspension on the day of a club activity, is not eligible to participate in a club activity on that day.

### **Athletics**

A student who wants to participate in interscholastic or intramural sports must have passing grades in all subjects and demonstrate appropriate behavior according to school rules. At the sole discretion of the Principal, a student who does not meet these standards may be granted permission to participate or may be declared ineligible to participate.

A student who is absent, arrives at school after 11:00 A.M., is dismissed before 11:00 A.M. and does not return, or is on suspension on the day of a practice or game, is not eligible to participate in the athletic activity on that day.

### Interscholastic Sports

Interscholastic sports offered at Hale include baseball, basketball, softball, and track/cross country.

A student's parent/guardian must provide the School Nurse with a copy of a student's physical exam in order for a student to participate on an interscholastic team. A student may not try out, or participate in any manner, with an interscholastic sports team without a current physical exam. The Principal cannot waive the physical exam requirement.

### Intramural Sports

Intramural sports happen at various times throughout the school year. The activities vary depending on the availability of coaches. Participation is open to all students not participating on an interscholastic sports team at the time of the intramural sports season.

A parent/guardian must sign a permission form in order for a student to participate in an intramural sport.

## **BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

### **Behavior**

A student is responsible for behaving appropriately and responsibly, and for following all school and classroom rules while in school, on school grounds, on a school bus, at a bus stop, and at school-sponsored activities. All behavior consequences are issued irrespective of race, sex, color, religion, gender identity national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness. (M.G.L. c. 76, s. 5.)

A student must be truthful academically, and in all dealings with other students, teachers, and all school staff.

Unacceptable behavior includes:

- Fighting or behaving in a threatening or violent manner;
- Bullying, harassing, hazing, or discriminating against any other person;
- Using abusive language or gestures;
- Stealing;
- Vandalizing, or failing to treat school property, or the property of others, with care and respect;
- Possessing, using, or selling alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, tobacco, tobacco products, or weapons;
- Truancy, leaving school grounds without permission, and skipping classes;
- Cheating and plagiarizing;
- Inappropriately using school resources, including technology resources;
- Other behavior that violates rules described in the Student Handbook (for example, regarding the use of cell phones) or that is disruptive (for example, public displays of affection).

### Bullying and Harassment

A student has the right to learn free from bullying and harassment, including electronic, verbal, and physical bullying and harassment. A student may not bully or harass another student, or any other person in or visiting the school, because of a person's age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or for any other reason.

All students and parents/guardians are responsible for recognizing, and reporting, any acts of bullying and harassment, including cyber-bullying, hazing, intimidation, and sexual harassment, to school staff. A student or parent/guardian who believes a student has been a target of bullying or harassment has the right to file a complaint with the school, and receive a prompt and confidential response.

When bullying or harassment occurs in school, or out of school but is disruptive to a student's participation in school-related activities, the school will take remedial action.

When there is a complaint of bullying or harassment, the school will ask the parent/guardian of the student about whom the complaint has been made to attend a meeting. The activity, and any words or images connected to the complaint, will be reviewed at the meeting. The student may not come to school until his/her parent/guardian comes to the meeting.

### Vandalism

A student may not willfully deface or destroy school property. If a student damages school property, the student may be subject to disciplinary action, and the student, or his/her parent/guardian, will be required to pay for cleaning, repairing, or replacing the property.

A student must report any damage to school property to a teacher or other school staff member.

### Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco

A student may not possess, use, distribute, or sell alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, tobacco, or tobacco-related products (for example, lighters and matches) on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity.

A student who possesses, uses, distributes, or sells alcohol, drugs, or tobacco before or during a school-sponsored activity will be subject to disciplinary action. In addition to other consequences, a student may be banned from participating in any other school-sponsored activity for a specified period of time.

A student who seeks help for an alcohol, drug, or tobacco issue from a Guidance Counselor, teacher, or other school staff person will not be subject to disciplinary action as long as the student has not been observed to be under the influence of, possessing, using, or selling alcohol, drugs, or tobacco.

### Weapons

A student may not transport, possess, or use a weapon on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity. Weapons include guns or knives of any sort, fireworks or explosives, dangerous chemicals, or any object that is not necessary for school and that could be used as a weapon and inflict bodily harm.

## Technology Resources

The school makes computers and technology information resources available to help ensure that students have a well-rounded education and to enhance the curriculum. A student must use school-provided technology resources responsibly and for academic work only.

The school will block and filter Internet sites that contain offensive, obscene, or age - inappropriate material. The school may look at information stored on, or sent from, its computers and network at any time, and may limit or suspend a student's access to these resources if the resources are misused.

The following activities are not permitted:

- Sending or displaying offensive pictures;
- Using obscene, offensive, or discriminatory language;
- Cyber-bullying, harassing, insulting, or attacking other people;
- Hacking or other unauthorized access;
- Trespassing in the files of other people;
- Violating copyright laws;
- Sharing personal information such as names, ages, addresses, and phone numbers;
- Sharing passwords or using another person's account;
- Intentionally wasting resources;
- Using the network for commercial purposes;
- Damaging computers, computer systems, or networks.

A student and a parent/guardian must sign a Contract for Use of the Internet Through School Resources before a student can use school computers and networked services.

## **School Climate And Culture**

A student may be subject to disciplinary action for engaging in conduct that violates the rules described in the Student Handbook, or any other behavior that is determined to be disruptive or dangerous.

A student has the right to be treated fairly, and to have an opportunity to present facts and information, in all disciplinary matters.

Disciplinary action may include detention, in-school suspension, external suspension, loss of ability to ride a school bus, or expulsion from school. The Principal may assign or adjust any disciplinary action, as s/he determines necessary. In addition to school disciplinary action, a student may also be subject to prosecution under state law, depending on the violation.

Schools and classrooms must operate with a degree of decorum that engages and nurtures all students at all times to maximize student intellectual, social and emotional growth and achievement. The Principal is responsible for promulgating the rules and procedures to ensure the law and school committee policy are in enacted in a fair and responsible manner.

Students may be suspended from their assigned course of study as a consequence and a teachable moment during the school year. During short term suspensions (ten days or less), in-school or out of school, the student is still able to access assignments, tests, and necessary

educational materials to continue to make academic progress. For long term suspensions (longer than ten days) the Principal is responsible for developing an educational plan that continues academic progress during the period of suspension.

A Principal may not impose an out of school suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent with oral and written notice and the opportunity to be heard. The notice must include the alleged disciplinary violation, the basis for the allegation, the potential length of the possible suspension and give the opportunity to be heard; including the date, time and location of the hearing. If the suspension is estimated to be longer than ten school days, the notice must also include information for the parents and guardians to review student records, the right to be represented by counsel, the right to bring witnesses and to present and explanation of the event(s). They also must be informed in the notice that they may cross examine witnesses presented by the district, and that they have the right to request that the hearing be audio taped by the Principal.

In-school suspensions require only that the parent and student be informed of the offense, the student be given the opportunity to respond, and after said response, the Principal must inform the student and the parent of the length of the in-school suspension. The parent or guardian must be told orally, however, then this notice must be put in writing; but not sent prior to the suspension being served. An email meets this requirement.

A Principal may remove a student temporarily (up to five school days) when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to person or property, or would materially disrupt the order of the school. The Principal must take immediate steps to inform the parent orally, and follow the same provisions of in-school suspension for written notice. A hearing for this action must be conducted within five school days.

Appeals to the Superintendent for any out of school long term suspension (longer than ten days) must be filed with five school days of the notice being sent, and it must be held within three school days; unless the parent agrees to an extension. A written hearing decision must be provided with five school days. These hearings must be audio taped. This appeal decision is final.

Before students reach ten days of suspension, the Principal is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate interventions are explored, chosen and enacted to help the student from continued behaviors that inhibit academic progress.

The principal is responsible for convening the student assistance team after the first suspension (in-school or out of school.) The team will examine causality, make recommendations for continued student academic, emotional and social progress, and support the staff in implementing the plan. The team will use the District's Accommodation Plan as a way of facilitating this discussion. The student plan may include a referral for further assessments, evaluations, design of behavior plans, work with specialists, such as the interventionist or behavior specialist, or recommendations for further follow up by the parent/guardian and student outside of the school day. All educators named in the plan are responsible for monitoring the plan and one person will be assigned to report to the student and parent/guardian progress status at agreed upon intervals.

Principals will publish a school-wide educational service plan for all students who may be expelled or suspended from school for more than ten days. Upon suspension or expulsion the principal must provide the student and parents with the educational service plan and facilitate a discussion of choice by student, if 18 or older, or the parent, if the student is younger than upon selection of an alternative educational service plan the principal will facilitate enrollment and continued participation to ensure academic progress. No student will be excluded from school for longer than ninety school days.

### **Behavioral Contract**

A student with continuing behavioral issues may be placed on a behavioral contract by the Principal. A copy of the contract, including its terms and conditions, will be given to the student and his/her parent/guardian. A behavioral contract does not need to be signed by a parent/guardian to be in effect.

If there is a complaint that a student has violated his/her behavioral contract, the Principal will meet with the student to determine whether a violation of the contract occurred, and the disciplinary actions, if any, that may be imposed. A student's parent/guardian and the Guidance Counselor may also be invited to attend the meeting.

## **HEALTH AND GUIDANCE RESOURCES**

### **Illness, Accidents, and Emergencies**

A School Nurse is available to help a student who feels ill or requires medication during the school day.

If a student needs medical attention but it is not an emergency, a student should report to his/her classroom first, and receive a pass to go to the Nurse's Office.

A student who wants to be dismissed because of health reasons must see, and have the approval of, the School Nurse before s/he can leave school. The School Nurse will contact the student's parent/guardian and ask the parent/guardian to pick up the student or authorize the student to leave school.

If a student is involved in an accident, s/he must report directly to the School Nurse. Any witnesses to the accident will be asked to fill out a report that will become part of the student's health record. Athletic injuries must be reported to an advisor, coach, or teacher and the School Nurse as soon as possible.

In the case of an emergency, a student must report directly to the Nurse's Office for immediate attention. The School Nurse will make arrangements for a student to be taken to a hospital emergency department, and will make every effort to immediately contact a student's parents/guardians or emergency contact, and the student's physician.

If an injury or serious illness occurs during the school day, and the school nurse is not immediately available, school staff will administer first aid and, if required, call emergency services.

## **Medication**

A student may not keep over-the-counter or prescription medications in his/her possession, backpack, or locker. A student who needs an Epipen for severe allergies or an inhaler for the treatment of asthma may carry these medications but should use them if at all possible under the direct supervision of the nurse. If a student self-administers in an emergency situation the nurse should be notified immediately. All medication must be kept in its original pharmacy container with its original label.

The Medication Order and Parent/Guardian Consent form is available on the Hale website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)) or from the Nurse's Office. The form must be signed by the student's clinician and parent/guardian and given to the School Nurse.

The School Nurse may administer certain over-the-counter medications (for example, Advil, Tylenol, and Tums) with a parent's/guardian's permission. A district-wide standing order for these medications is written by a physician who supports the NRSD.

## **Health Screenings**

Health screenings such as vision, hearing, postural, and body mass index screenings are conducted during the school year as required by state regulations. Students and parents/guardians will be notified when screenings are scheduled. If a screening identifies a potential issue, a student's parents/guardians will be notified by the School Nurse. If a parent/guardian does not want a student to participate in a screening, the parent/guardian must write a note to the School Nurse.

## **Guidance**

A Guidance Counselor can help a student and his/her family in many different ways. A Guidance Counselor can help, for example, with: an evaluation of a student's abilities; discussion of personal difficulties; counseling on issues between students or with teachers.

A student can make an appointment with a Guidance Counselor by going directly to the Guidance Office. If the Guidance Counselor is not available, a student can leave a note or ask for assistance in the Main Office.

## **OTHER RULES AND INFORMATION**

### **Bathroom Passes**

A student who needs to use the bathroom must sign out from the classroom or the cafeteria, and use the bathroom closest to the classroom or cafeteria. A student may not use the bathroom between class periods without going to his/her classroom first to sign out.

### **Cell Phones**

Cell phones that are brought to school must be registered with the school. Students found to have an unregistered cell phone will not be permitted to bring a phone to school.

Cell phones must not interfere with learning and teaching during the school day. Phones must be turned off and must not be visible during the school day unless being used in conjunction with the District's bring your own device policy.

A student who breaks the cell phone rules will be subject to the following consequences.

- First offense: the cell phone will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day.
- Second offense: the cell phone will be confiscated and the student's parent/guardian will be notified and asked to pick up the phone.
- Subsequent and repeated offenses: the student will be subject to additional disciplinary action and will not be permitted to bring a phone to school.

If a student's phone is confiscated due to breaking of the rules, the school has the absolute right to review the contents of that phone. If a phone is password protected the student must provide access to the contents of the phone or face additional disciplinary actions.

### **Concerts**

School concerts are held twice a year (Winter and Spring). Bands from each grade, the Jazz Bands, and the Chorus typically perform at each concert. A student performing in a concert should plan to wear black pants/skirt and a white top, unless otherwise specified.

### **Dances**

School dances are for Hale students only. School personnel and parents supervise all school-sponsored dances.

There are dances that are held at school that are sponsored by organizations other than Hale; these dances are not supervised by school staff. These sponsoring-organizations provide their own chaperones, and are encouraged, but not required, to apply all school rules.

### **Dress Code**

A student must wear clothing that is appropriate for school and have a clean and neat appearance. Safe and appropriate footwear must be worn at all times; closed-toe shoes must be worn in Science and Technology Education classes for safety reasons

A student must avoid inappropriate clothing such as:

- Any article of clothing that does not cover the midriff, buttocks, or underwear;
- Underwear worn as outer-wear;
- Pajama pants or tops
- Tops that are low cut
- Chains worn as jewelry or on pants;
- Clothing that displays drug, alcohol, or tobacco logos, or depicts the use of drug, alcohol, or tobacco;
- Any other clothing that is disruptive.

Additionally, hats or hoods may not be worn at any time in school, unless specifically approved by the Principal (for example, on a Spirit Day). Words, drawings, or symbols that could be considered inappropriate or disruptive are not permitted on any article of clothing, bags, backpacks, etc.

If a student is not appropriately dressed, a student's parent/guardian may be contacted and asked to bring an acceptable change of clothing to school. A parent/guardian may also be contacted if a student does not respond properly to a teacher's request to comply with the dress code, or if a student continues to wear inappropriate clothes to school.

### **Eighth Grade Trip**

A student in the Eighth Grade will have the option to participate in a school-sponsored, parent/guardian-paid trip to Washington, D.C. The trip typically happens in May and parents/guardians have the opportunity to pay for the trip in installment payments throughout the year. The school will send information about the trip to parents/guardians at the beginning of the year.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are scheduled from time to time during the school year. Trips are designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum, and to introduce students to the resources of the area.

A student will receive a permission form for every field trip, and must get a parent/guardian signature and return the form to school. For every field trip for which a parent/guardian is asked to help pay the cost, a parent/guardian may contact the school for assistance if needed.

A student must meet academic and behavior requirements before a trip in order to participate on a trip. A student who does not behave appropriately while on a trip may be subject to disciplinary action. Classes will be held at school for students who are not participating in a field trip.

### **Fundraising**

A student may not conduct any fundraising activity on school property or at a school-sponsored activity unless approved by the Principal.

### **Gum**

A student may not chew gum during the school day unless specifically approved by the Principal (for example, during MCAS).

### **Gym**

A student's schedule will include Gym class, usually twice a week. A student should bring Gym clothes and sneakers to school and expect to change in and out of his/her Gym clothes in the locker room at the beginning and end of the Gym class period. A student must change for Gym. A portion of a student's grade for Gym will reflect whether the student changed and was prepared to participate.

### **Library**

The school library is open to all students and parents/guardians during the school day until 3:00 p.m. The library's collection consists of thousands of fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, and non-print reference materials. The library also has access to numerous subscription databases.

Most library books and materials can be checked out for three weeks. Books and materials may be renewed twice as long as another student has not reserved the material. Reference books can be checked out with special permission for three days. Books and materials must be returned when due. Overdue notices will be distributed in Homeroom. After several overdue notices, a bill for the cost of replacing the material will be sent home.

A student is responsible for borrowed materials as soon as the material is checked out of the library. Library materials must be treated with care. A student who damages materials will be responsible for replacing them.

A student is required to have a pass to go to the library if s/he is going to the library outside of a class.

A student must observe the following rules when in the library:

- Talk in quiet tones, including when doing group school work.
- Use library computers for school purposes only.
- Get permission from the librarian or a teacher before printing materials from the Internet or electronic media.
- Don't bring food into the library; water is the only drink allowed.

### **Lockers and Personal Items**

A student receives a locker assignment at the beginning of the school year for the storage of backpacks, books and school supplies, coats, boots, and other necessary clothing. A student must put his/her backpack in a locker at the beginning of each day; a backpack may not be carried in school during the day under ordinary circumstances. Each student should use only one locker.

Lockers are the property of the school. The school reserves the right to search lockers at any time. A student may not use a locker to store anything that is prohibited, hazardous, or illegal. Personal items that are not essential for school should be left at home. Any personal item brought to school that is disruptive will be confiscated and returned to a student at the end of the school day.

### **Lost and Found**

There is a lost and found area at Hale. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to check the lost and found area for missing items. Articles left unclaimed at the end of each trimester will be donated to a charity.

### **Lunch and School Cafeteria**

The school offers a well-balanced lunch every day, including on early release days. A menu for the month is on the school website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)) and in each Homeroom.

A student must pre-pay for school lunches. A parent/guardian can pre-pay for lunch through a link on the Hale website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)), and can access information on the balance of a student's lunch account through PowerSchool. Parents/Guardians may see the Parent/Guardian Supplement for more information on how to access information on assistance available to pay for school lunches.

A student with a negative balance in their lunch account will be provided with an alternative meal.

A student must observe the following rules when in the school cafeteria:

- Keep conversations at an appropriate noise level.
- Don't share or trade food or utensils.
- Don't take food or beverages out of the cafeteria.
- Pick up all trash and food and put it in the proper trash or recycling container.
- Use the water/juice machines only during the lunch period.

### **Recess**

There is a daily recess every day as a part of the lunch period. Recess is a time for students to be with friends and to have an opportunity for physical activity.

Recess is outside every day except when it is extremely rainy or cold. A student must be dressed appropriately to participate in recess outside. On inclement weather days, recess will be held inside.

### **Safety and Security**

The school has electronic locks on all doors and cameras in certain locations in school and on school property. During the school day, everyone must enter the building through the front door, stop at the Main Office, and receive a visitor's pass. No one may prop open, or allow anyone to enter, through any door other than the front door. A student must report any suspicious visitor or behavior to a teacher or other school staff person.

Specific directions for exiting the school in the event of an emergency or drill are posted in each room. In the event of an evacuation, a student must follow a teacher's instructions, and exit the building quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner. In the event of a lockdown, a student must follow the instructions of the closest school staff person.

The school and Stow Police and Fire Departments conduct evacuation, fire, and lockdown drills during the school year. Bus evacuation drills are also conducted at least twice a year so a student knows what to do in an emergency situation on a bus. A student must cooperate with these drills.

A student who is determined to be purposefully responsible for a false alarm will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **School Store**

The School Store is open during advertised hours. See the Hale website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)) for details about store hours and what supplies are available at the store. If anyone needs financial assistance for the purpose of obtaining class supplies, please contact the principal confidentially.

### **Transportation**

All school rules apply when a student is waiting for or riding on a school bus. A student may not eat while on a school bus. A bus driver may also provide additional safety rules. If a student does not follow the instructions of, or cooperate with, a bus driver, the bus driver will report the incident, and a student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Information on bus routes and NRSD policies regarding transportation can be found on the NRSD website ([www.nrsd.net](http://www.nrsd.net)).

### **Visitors**

Parents/Guardians and other visitors are welcome to visit the school. To enter the building during the school day, all visitors must ring the bell at the front door, speak with Main Office staff through the intercom system, and wait for the electronic lock to be disengaged. All visitors must stop at the Main Office to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. The visitor's pass must be displayed at all times during the visit. The visitor must return to the Main Office at the end of the visit to return the pass and sign out.

If a student wants to bring a guest to school, the student must get permission from the Principal at least two days prior to the anticipated visit. A student may ask the Main Office for a permission form on which the student must secure the signature of a parent/guardian, the Principal, and each teacher, if the guest will be accompanying the student to classes. The Principal will have the sole discretion to determine whether to permit the guest to visit. A guest must comply with the rules of the school; if a guest does not follow school rules, the guest will be asked to end their visit and leave the school.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN SUPPLEMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **About the Parent/Guardian Supplement to the Student Handbook**

The Parent/Guardian Supplement to the Student Handbook provides information on certain topics of general interest to most parents/guardians. Where a topic is included in both the Student Handbook and the Parent/Guardian Supplement to the Student Handbook, the information in the Parent/Guardian Supplement is included to provide parents/guardians with a more comprehensive understanding of the applicable NRSD policy. In some areas, NRSD policies are fully described. The Supplement is not designed, however, to provide exhaustive detail on all school and NRSD policies. Parents/guardians who want more information on any topic should see the NRSD website ([www.nrsd.net](http://www.nrsd.net)) or ask in the Main Office.

#### **Consent to Public Identification of Student**

Throughout the school year, school staff acknowledge and celebrate students' achievements and work. This may be accomplished through displays of work, and through various printed, electronic, recorded, and photographic mediums, such as websites, brochures, and newspapers.

A parent/guardian signature on the Student Handbook sign-off form indicates acknowledgement that a student's image or work may be publicly displayed. If a parent/guardian does not want a student or his/her work to be identified, the parent/guardian must notify the Principal in writing.

#### **Equal Opportunity**

It is the goal of the District to promote schools and workplaces that are free of unlawful discrimination and harassment of any type, that is based upon a characteristic protected by law, such as gender, gender identity, race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetics, military status, sexual orientation, or participation in discrimination complaint-related activities (retaliation). NRSD will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects employment condition or that interferes unreasonably with an individual's performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

### **COMMUNICATION**

#### **Communications From School**

Hale's Principal regularly uses e-mail and the monthly school newsletter to provide information to parents/guardians about what is happening in school. E-mails are typically used to convey time-sensitive information, (for example, reminders about school-wide events or news on incidents that happen in school). The school newsletter is typically used to provide information on topics of general interest (for example, school policies, school-wide test results or findings from surveys, the availability of resources for students). The newsletter is posted to the Hale website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)) and available in the Main Office.

Teachers regularly use Google Apps and their class-specific Google sites to provide information about homework and long-term project assignments, and PowerSchool to communicate grades. (Please see the Academics section of the Student Handbook and the PowerSchool section below

for further information.) Teachers typically use e-mail to communicate with a parent/guardian about a specific area of concern with a student's academic performance or behavior. (Teachers are available to discuss any such matter in person if requested by a parent/guardian.) At their discretion, teachers may also use e-mail to let parents/guardians know about major projects, upcoming activities, or new areas of focus in the curriculum.

The School Nurse makes phone calls to speak with parents/guardians about time-sensitive health-related issues.

Parents/guardians must make sure that school staff are informed about a parent's/guardian's preferred method of communication, and ensure that the school is informed whenever there is a change in contact information.

### **Back to School Night**

Every year, early in the school year, Hale hosts a Back to School Night for parents/guardians to introduce Hale's Principal and teachers, and to provide information on the curriculum and available support services. Parents/guardians have an opportunity to follow their child's schedule and meet their child's teachers.

### **Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences**

Parent/guardian conferences are formally scheduled twice during the school year in accordance with the NRSB school calendar. Parents/guardians may request a conference with a teacher at any time during the school year by contacting the teacher.

### **PowerSchool**

PowerSchool is a secure, web-based tool that lets a parent/guardian view a student's grades and other information (for example, the student's lunch account balance). A parent/guardian can register for access to PowerSchool through the Hale website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net)).

Parents/guardians may direct any questions about PowerSchool to Kathy Leonardi, NRSB Information Management Officer, at [kleonardi@nrsd.net](mailto:kleonardi@nrsd.net) or 978-779-0539, ext. 3059.

## **CURRICULUM**

### **Brochures, Standards, and Benchmarks**

Brochures that provide an overview of grade-level and subject area curriculum are available on the NRSB website ([www.nrsd.net](http://www.nrsd.net)). The NRSB website also provides information on the standards and benchmarks that are used to measure student progress and achievement.

### **Health and Sex Education**

Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing of the curriculum offered that involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. A parent/guardian may review the program instruction materials for the curriculum, and may ask that a student be excused from any portion of the curriculum. A parent/guardian may request that a student be excused by contacting the Principal in writing.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

### **Emergency Contact and Health Information**

At the beginning of the school year, a parent/guardian will receive, and must complete, a student emergency and health information form. On the form, parents/guardians must: identify the name, address, and phone number of individuals who can be reached in an emergency if the parent/guardian is unavailable; provide health information for the student, including any known allergies; and, sign a medical release to permit transportation to a hospital in the event of an emergency.

### **Seventh Grade Entry**

As required by state regulation, the following documentation must be on file with the school prior to a student entering 7<sup>th</sup> Grade. The information must be provided by a parent/guardian to the School Nurse before the September in which a student will start 7th Grade.

- Physical Examination (conducted within the previous year)
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 1 TdaP booster (if more than 5 years have passed since the last dose)
- 2 doses of Varicella or a physician-certified history of chicken pox (a physician-certified history of chicken pox may consist of a physician interpretation of parent/guardian description of chicken pox, or physician diagnosis of chicken pox, or serologic proof of immunity (varicella blood titer)
- 2 doses of MMR.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

### **Free and Reduced Price Meals**

Applications for free milk and free and reduced price meals are sent home at the beginning of the school year. Applications are also available at all times on the NRSD website ([www.nrsd.net](http://www.nrsd.net)) and in the Main Office. If you are, or think you may be, eligible, please take advantage of this benefit. The process is confidential for parents/guardians and students. A student accessing a free or reduced price meal will enter a lunch code at the cashier station in the cafeteria like all other students.

### **Field Trips**

For every field trip for which a parent/guardian is asked to help pay the cost, the parent/guardian may contact the school for assistance if the cost of the trip will present a financial hardship. Hale is committed to ensuring that all students have equal access to full participation in educational opportunities and encourages parents/guardians to ask for assistance if needed.

### **Yearbooks**

Hale will make scholarships available to help a student purchase a Yearbook. Please see the Yearbook Order form for details.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL**

### **Volunteering in School**

Hale welcomes parents/guardians as volunteers to help support a variety of educational, co-curriculum, and administrative activities.

As required by state law and NRSB policy, all volunteers in school must first have a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) background check from the Criminal History Systems Board. If you expect that you will want to volunteer for any school activity (for example, field trips, work in the Main Office, or classroom), please complete a CORI request form available from the Main Office.

### **Parent-Teacher Organization**

The Stow PTO at Hale meets monthly at Hale. All parents/guardians are automatically part of the Stow PTO at Hale, and newcomers are welcome at every meeting.

More information, including calendar items, meeting minutes, and by-laws, are available on the website ([www.stowpto.org](http://www.stowpto.org)).

### **School Council**

The Education Reform Act requires the involvement of teachers, school administrators, parents/guardians, students, and community members in the establishment of goals and standards for local schools. A School Council is the vehicle for this partnership, and acts in an advisory capacity to the Principal.

At Hale, the School Council is comprised of the Principal, parents/guardians, teachers, and community members. The School Council meets monthly, and action subcommittees meet on an as-needed basis. Responsibilities include the following:

- Review and make recommendations regarding the school budget and school policies.
- Review and make recommendations regarding the Student Handbook.
- Review and make recommendations regarding the School Improvement Plan and associated goals, measures, and action plans. (The School Improvement Plan can be found on the Hale website ([hale.nrsd.net](http://hale.nrsd.net))).

Any parent interested in joining School Council may contact the Principal.

### **Special Education Parents' Advisory Council**

The Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAAC) is open to everyone. SEPAAC meets regularly (usually monthly) to provide information and support to parents/guardians of students with special needs. More information can be found on the NRSB website ([www.nrsd.net](http://www.nrsd.net)).

## **PICKING UP STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

A parent/guardian who is picking up a student from Hale should park in one of the designated parking areas. Parents/guardians should not park in the fire lane for any reason, and should limit vehicle idling to no more than five minutes. Students who are being picked up will be dismissed after the school buses have left the parking area.

## **NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES**

### **Alcohol and Drug Use**

The alcohol and drug abuse policy has been established to help assure the welfare of individual students and the general welfare of the members of the school community. Any student or parent who seeks guidance on an alcohol or drug issue from the Principal, Guidance Counselor, teacher, or other staff person will be provided with such guidance without resulting disciplinary action for the student, provided the student is not observed to be under the influence of, using, possessing, or selling alcohol or drugs on school property or at a school-related function. The transportation, use, possession, distribution, or sale of alcohol, drugs, or drug paraphernalia, (including look-alike drugs and substances), on school property, or at any school activity is strictly prohibited.

If a student transports, uses, possesses, distributes, or sells alcohol, drugs, suspected drug materials (including look-alike drugs/substances), drug paraphernalia or devices, or is suspected of same, the school may:

- Notify the student's parents/guardians.
- Search the student, the student's belongings, or the student's locker.
- Refer the matter to law enforcement personnel.
- Take any other action deemed appropriate to maintain the safety and order of the school.

If the school has reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs on school property or at a school-related event, the Principal (or his/her designee) may:

- Contact the School Nurse and the student's parents/guardians.
- Decide, in consultation with the School Nurse, whether the student should remain in school, be taken for emergency medical treatment or evaluation, or be released to the student's parents/ guardians.
- Notify law enforcement personnel.
- Make a referral to the Guidance Counselor.

Disciplinary actions, up to and including expulsion from school, may be imposed for violations of the NRSD alcohol and drug abuse policy. When a student is suspended or expelled for an alcohol or drug-related act, the Principal will meet with the student and his/her parent/guardian prior to the student returning to school.

### **Attendance**

A student must be in school on a scheduled school day unless circumstances make the student unable to attend. A student must be in school or at a school-related activity (for example, a field trip) for at least one hour beyond the student's scheduled lunch to be considered present for an entire day. When the student arrives before the lunch period ends, or is dismissed after the lunch period starts, the student will be considered present for a half day. Seven instances of tardy count as a full day of absence. Seven early dismissals count as a full day of absence.

### Excused Absences

A parent/guardian may excuse a student's absence, with a written note, for up to seven full days (or 14 half days). After this, the student's absence can be excused only if a parent/guardian, with a written note, identifies that the absence is due to a bereavement, family or catastrophic event,

observation of a legal holiday, illness, or legal event.

### Unexcused Absences

A student cannot have more than seven unexcused absences in a six-month period. Any day out of school for vacation (on scheduled school days) counts as an unexcused absence, even if a parent/guardian provides a written note.

### Consequences

When the Principal determines that a student has excessive (excused and/or unexcused) absences, the Principal will contact the student's parent/guardian in writing with a reminder of NRSD's policy, the state law, and of the parent's/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the student attends school. The letter will include a summary of the student's year-to-date attendance, ask that the parent/guardian attend a meeting at school to discuss the matter, and offer assistance to the parent/guardian to help address the situation.

A student who has excessive absences may be subject to consequences determined by the Principal. In addition to academic consequences, other consequences may include: a student's required attendance at summer school, at the parent's/guardian's expense; a student becoming ineligible to participate in athletic competition; a parent/guardian being subject to a civil fine. The Principal has the sole discretion to waive any consequences.

## **Bullying and Harassment**

Nashoba Regional School District is committed to providing a learning and working atmosphere for students, employees, and visitors free from bullying/harassment (sexual harassment, cyber-bullying, hazing, and intimidation.) Such action may occur on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation or for any other reason.

It is a violation for any employee, student, or visitor to engage in or condone bullying/harassment in school or at school-related functions, or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when s/he becomes aware of an incident of bullying/harassment.

The school will take remedial and/or disciplinary action when such bullying/harassment occurs in or out of school, but has a nexus to school, or is disruptive to an employee's or student's work or participation in school-related activities. This includes reports of bullying/harassment, verbal, physical, electronic or in any other form.

Parents/guardians of students alleged to have engaged in bullying/harassment (verbal, physical or electronic) will be invited to attend a meeting at which the activity, words, or images connected to the complaint will be reviewed. A student disciplined for bullying/harassment will not be readmitted to the regular school program until parents/guardians have come into the school to discuss the circumstances of the event(s).

It is the responsibility of every employee, parent, and student to recognize acts of bullying/harassment, and to take every action necessary to see that necessary protocols and procedures are followed. An employee, parent, or student who believes s/he has been the target of bullying/harassment has the right to file a complaint and receive a prompt, confidential response in accordance with NRSD protocol and policy. In some cases, in order to proceed,

outside agencies may be contacted and involved so information relating to the complaint may be released.

### **Hazing**

Any conduct or method of initiation into any school organization, club, or activity that willfully endangers a person's physical and/or mental health is prohibited by state law (M.G.L. Ch. 269, §§ 17-19). Such conduct includes whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity that is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of a student or other person, or subject a student or other person to extreme mental stress, including deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Consent to the conduct is not a permitted defense in prosecutions of violations of the state law.

Students who engage in hazing may be suspended from school, removed from any athletic team or co-curricular activity, fined up to \$3000, or imprisoned.

### **Discipline**

The school is responsible for working with parents/guardians to educate students regarding appropriate conduct and the need to take responsibility for behavior. Through direct instruction, modeling, and counseling, the school will help students to master these areas. The school's demonstration of fairness, respect, and consistency in its administration of the discipline policy is of paramount importance. This is vital to the instruction and nurturing of moral character of students.

A student may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension from school, for engaging in conduct that violates the rules described in the Student Handbook or NRSD rules and policies or engaging in any form of academic misconduct.

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to the following behavior of students while they are on school grounds, in school buildings, or attending or participating in school-sponsored activities or events:

Fighting or behaving violently; inappropriate cafeteria behavior; threatening another with bodily harm; intimidating students or school staff; disruptive behavior in classrooms or elsewhere; using abusive language or gestures, including improper racial or ethnic remarks; harassment; obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic; creating a hazardous or physically offensive condition by any act that serves no legitimate purpose; is insubordinate - that is, failing to comply with the lawful directions of teachers, school administrators, or other school employees in charge of the student; oppositional or defiant behavior; truancy and leaving school grounds without permission; failure to fulfill disciplinary obligations in a timely fashion; vandalism, or any destruction of real or personal property (including graffiti or arson); theft; possession, use, sale of drugs, alcohol, or drug paraphernalia; possession of weapons or fireworks; possession or use of tobacco or tobacco products; setting off the fire alarm; gambling; hazing; inappropriate use of the Internet; game playing; entering into any private office of an administrative officer, member of the faculty, staff member, teachers' room, and/or the auditorium lobby/bathroom without permission; entering and remaining in the building or facility for any purpose other than its authorized uses or in such manner as to obstruct its authorized use by others; refusing or failing to report to directed study; without authorization,

remaining in any building or facility after it is normally closed; refusing to leave any building, classroom, or facility after being instructed to do so by an authorized administrative officer, member of the faculty, or staff member; failure to report to the main office after being instructed to do so by an administrator, member of the faculty, or staff member; tardiness; cheating/plagiarism.

The school reserves the right to take disciplinary action for any other behavior or conduct that is not specifically listed above or addressed in the Student Handbook. The Principal may adjust the disciplinary action to be imposed upon a student if extenuating, aggravated, or mitigating circumstances exist.

The purpose of disciplinary intervention is to modify behavior in an appropriate manner. Disciplinary interventions are designed to restore acceptable behavior in order to protect all members of the community, to create a safe and pleasant environment conducive to learning, and to teach mutual respect, responsibility, accountability, and the skills for self management of behavior. Disciplinary interventions are administered with fairness and consistency, and directly relate to the individual needs and circumstances based on a balance of positive reinforcement and logical consequences. Disciplinary intervention includes a range of alternatives designed to identify problems and modify behaviors. Interventions take place in a timely manner. Disciplinary interventions support students remaining in school and in their classroom to increase the likelihood of students' academic and social success. This is not done, however, at the expense of effective teaching time of other students. No student has the right to disrupt class or interfere with the instruction of fellow students.

Academic consequences are employed only for academic offenses, (for example, failure to prepare for class, cheating, and plagiarism). Academic discipline is based upon a system of logical consequences. Academic consequences may include a lower grade.

### **Civil and Criminal Offenses**

In serious cases requiring legal action, students may be remanded to the custody of police. Parent/guardians will be notified of this decision as stated herein. Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony conviction, the student shall be give due process according to M.G.L. Chapter 71, § 37H ½. Under this law, if the principal has deemed that the presence of the student would have substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, the principal may suspend the student. The student may appeal this decision to the Superintendent of Schools, but shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the disciplinary action. Such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent of Schools. ***In felonies involving weapons, should the principal not recommend exclusion, the student's safety plan will require daily searches upon entering the building.***

### **Discipline of Students with Special Education Needs**

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and related regulations provide eligible students with certain procedural rights and protections. A brief overview of these rights relating

to discipline in school is provided below.

In general, special education students may be excluded from their programs, just as any other student can be, for up to ten school days per year. Additionally, in certain circumstances, special education students may be removed for additional periods of time beyond ten school days in the same school year. When a special education student is excluded from his/her program for more than ten school days in a school year, the student's special education team must develop a functional behavioral assessment plan. In many instances, the team may also be required to determine whether the student's behavior was related to his/her disability.

If the team determines the behavior was not related to the student's disability, the school may discipline the student according to the school's disciplinary procedures, except that NRSB must continue to provide the student with educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion.

If the team determines that the behavior was related to the disability, the student may not be excluded, except in the case of behavior involving weapons or drugs, from his/her current educational program until the team develops, and the parents/guardians consent to a new Individualized Education Plan.

If a special education student possesses, uses, sells, or solicits a controlled substance or possesses a weapon at school or at a school-sponsored activity, a school may place the student in an interim alternative education setting for up to 45 days. A Massachusetts Bureau of Special Education Appeals hearing officer may also order the placement of a student in an appropriate interim setting for up to 45 days upon determination that the current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others.

When a parent/guardian disagrees with a Team's decision or with a decision regarding placement, the parent/guardian has a right to request an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

Additional information regarding procedural protections for special education students can be obtained from NRSB's Director of Special Education.

### **Special Education Needs**

A student who has a permanent or temporary disability may be eligible to receive special accommodations, additional help to learn, and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that details the type of assistance that the student needs. A parent/guardian may request a special needs evaluation by sending a letter to the Principal. If it is determined that a student will have an IEP, a student's parents/guardians will be part of the special education team meeting in which the IEP is developed.

The Nashoba Regional School District needs your help to identify all children in the community, age 3 to 22, who may require special education services. If you are aware of a child who has or may have a disability, who may not be known to the district, please contact the Special Education Department @ 978-779-0539 x3013.

## **Use of Networked Information Resources**

NRSD recognizes the value and importance of network information sources and related technologies for a well-rounded education. NRSD supports access of students and staff within appropriate bounds.

NRSD makes telecommunications, electronic information sources, and networked services available for the enhancement of learning and teaching within various curricula. NRSD expects the staff to blend thoughtful use of these educational avenues throughout the school experience and provide guidance and instruction to all students in the appropriate use of these resources.

NRSD realizes the positive and constructive use of these resources; it also recognizes the potential for possible misuse. Therefore, individual users must take full responsibility for their own actions. All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial or otherwise, for their actions. NRSD reserves the right to access, audit, and review usage. Use shall be governed by administrative regulations, procedures, user guidelines and user agreements. Information stored or transmitted on NRSD computer systems is the property of NRSD and may be reviewed by NRSD at any time.

In order to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), this document will serve as NRSD's Internet Safety Policy. NRSD has a content filter in place that blocks and filters Internet sites that are obscene, contain pornography, or contain any material deemed to be inappropriate or harmful to minors as defined by CIPA [Pub.L.No.106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

NRSD includes in its curriculum Internet safety. The curriculum includes teaching students about appropriate and safe online behavior, including intellectual property, personal safety, and cyber-bullying awareness and response. To the extent practical, staff supervises and monitors appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy.

NRSD takes cyber-bullying seriously and appropriate action will be taken to protect students and staff from any form of cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic means, and includes the distribution of electronic communications or the posting of electronic material that may be accessed by one or more persons.

Bullying is defined as the repeated use of a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students directed at another student that has the effect of:

- Causing physical or emotional harm to the other student or damage to his or her property;
- Placing the other student in reasonable fear of harm to him or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- Creating a hostile environment at school for the bullied student;
- Infringing on the rights of the other student at school;
- Materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Ethical participation in academic interactive web resources and electronic forms of communication is expected of all students and staff. Any text, voice or image that is considered inappropriate in the classroom is also inappropriate in all uses of interactive web resources and any electronic communications. This includes, but is not limited to, profanity, racist, sexist, or

other threatening or discriminatory remarks. Students should promptly inform a staff member if any messages received or material reviewed is inappropriate.

All personal or school-owned technology and electronic devices shall be monitored. All technology and electronic devices should be used primarily for academic purposes during official school hours. Use of the network, technology and electronic devices shall be permitted only upon submission of an agreement form signed by the student and a parent/guardians. Some networks may require an additional agreement by users; (i.e. outlining standards for behavior and communication). User accounts shall be limited, suspended, or revoked if these resources are misused.

The following are not permitted:

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures;
- Using obscene language;
- Harassing, insulting, or attacking others;
- Unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Trespassing in others' electronic files or plagiarizing others' work as your own;
- Violating copyright laws;
- Revealing identifying information such as first and last names, ages, addresses, phone numbers, parents'/guardians' names, parents'/guardians' employers or work addresses, or photographs, unless approved by a teacher for the purpose of meeting course requirements;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of person identification information regarding minors;
- Sharing a password or using others' accounts and passwords;
- Intentionally wasting limited resources (for example, excessive printing, downloading, or online streaming);
- Employing the network for commercial or other non-academic purpose;
- Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks.

### **Gender Equity**

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly-attended public schools.

No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.